

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAGHDA 01414 091707Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /011 W
-----069704 091720Z /45 R
R 090835Z JUL 78
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6431

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 1414

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CGEN, APER
SUBJECT: DETENTION OF LOCAL EMPLOYEE

REF: STATE 170902

1. RUMORS CIRCULATE IN BAGHDAD THAT AN AMNESTY WILL BE DECLARED IN CONNECTION WITH THE CELEBRATIONS OF JULY 14/17, BUT WHETHER OR NOT THERE WILL ACTUALLY BE ONE, FOR WHOM, AND TO WHAT EXTENT IS NOT YET KNOWN. AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, GOI HAS NOT NORMALLY FOLLOWED A PROGRAM OF DECLARING AMNESTIES, BUT SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS COULD GENERATE AN EXCEPTION. IN THE ONLY EXAMPLE IN THE PAST OF WHICH WE ARE AWARE, AMNESTY TOOK THE FORM OF A PERCENTAGE REDUCTION OF THE SENTENCE. IF ABBAS WERE TO BE INCLUDED IN AN AMNESTY, WHICH IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN, HE WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE RELEASED UNLESS IT WERE BROAD ENOUGH TO BRING ABOUT THE EXPIRATION OF HIS REMAINING SENTENCE.

2. AS THE DEPT IS AWARE, WE HAVE NEVER BEEN OFFICIALLY ADVISED WHY ABBAS IS IN PRISON. THERE HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT INPUTS AT THE MFA WORKING LEVEL, BY USINT, AND BY OTHERS AT A HIGH LEVEL (BELGIAN AMBASSADOR, FORMER AMBASSADOR JAMES AKINS) TO INDICATE STRONG INTEREST IN SECURING HIS RELEASE. THE EFFECTS OF
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THESE REPRESENTATIONS ARE OF COURSE UNKNOWN, BUT MRS. ABBAS TELLS US THAT HER HUSBAND EXPECTS (OR AT LEAST HOPES) TO BE RELEASED IN THE COMING FEW DAYS.

3. WE WILL PROBABLY FIND OUT ABOUT ABBAS' RELEASE SHORTLY AFTER REPEAT AFTER IT TAKES PLACE AND NOT BEFORE. WE JUDGE, HOWEVER, THAT THE LIKELIHOOD

OF HIS RELEASE IN AN AMNESTY THIS MONTH IS POOR TO FAIR, AND
IN DECEMBER OF THIS YEAR FAIR TO GOOD.
PECK

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NNN

Message Attributes

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